

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, it has been 1 year since hundreds of Republican House Members and candidates gathered on the steps of the Capitol and signed a Contract With America. Since then, the Republican Party has gone on to revolutionize American politics and to change business as usual inside the beltway.

In the contract, we made specific promises to vote on specific pieces of legislation. We kept our word. We showed the American people that politicians can come to Washington and actually keep promises—something they have not seen for many years.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are still dedicated to the promises we made in the contract. We will reduce the size and scope of the Federal Government. We will cut taxes for working families. We will reform welfare. We will balance the budget.

In short, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to fight for the change that the American people demanded last November, and we will not rest until we have accomplished our goal.

DO NOT EXCLUDE AMERICAN PEOPLE FROM THE MEDICARE DEBATE

(Mr. DINGELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, we have had 28 days of hearings on Whitewater, 14 days of hearings on Waco-Ruby Ridge. We had 2 days of hearings on the Chinese prison system.

Mr. Speaker, 1 day of hearing has been held on Medicare. We were supposed to commence the markup of this legislation right after we returned from the August recess. The legislation was supposed to be ready for the floor. Yet time after time, this proposal has been postponed.

We have not had but 1 day of hearing. We have not considered the legislation. The clock is running. The calendar is turning.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to be fair. What do my Republican colleagues have to hide? Why is it that they are afraid to bring the American people into consideration of their proposal to cut Medicare \$270 billion, to make a savings that is only necessary to be \$89 billion, according to the trustees of the Social Security System?

Let us be fair. Let us be open. Let us have hearings. Let us not continue this process of delay, while we at the same time exclude the American people from the process.

REPUBLICANS ARE STRENGTHENING, PROTECTING, AND PRESERVING MEDICARE

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California [Mr. MCKEON], my colleague from Santa Clarita, was telling me that over the weekend he talked to a constituent who said to him,

It was interesting. Last Friday I turned on CNN and I saw the Democrats out on the lawn in the rain holding these hearings, claiming that Republicans were not holding hearings on Medicare. And then I flipped to C-SPAN, and there was the hearings in the Committee on Ways and Means on the issue of health care reform and Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, I am struck to hear the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. DINGELL] talk about the litany of hearings on other issues. The Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Commerce held 26 hearings. Last Friday's was the 27th hearing on the issue of Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, I tore out a letter in yesterday's L.A. Times in which this fellow, Frank Anderson from Irvine, said that,

On January 3, 1992, at age 65, my Medicare part B premiums were \$31.80 per month. To and including January 3, 1995, I have had 3 increases, about \$5 each, to raise my premium to \$46.10 per month. If nothing is done, and continuing at this rate for the next 7 years, I would expect 7 more \$5 increases to raise the premium to about \$81.10 per month.

Mr. Speaker, he goes on to point to the fact that our total would be about \$90; President Clinton's, \$83. We are strengthening, protecting, and preserving Medicare.

THE RICH GET RICHER AND YOU KNOW THE REST

(Miss COLLINS of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Miss COLLINS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to question the direction of our economy. A recent study by the Economic Policy Institute indicates that although our economic growth has been healthy, living standards for the average American family have continued to fall. The study suggests that there are two types of inequality that have led to the disconnect between economic growth and living standards. First, in the 1990's, overall wage growth has been dampened by a redistribution of income from labor to owners of capital in the form of profits. The report indicates that the economic return to capital, has actually reached historically high levels in this country. Second, however, the growth of wage inequality that began in the 1980's and persisted throughout the 1990's has prevented middle- and low-wage earners from achieving higher wages and has forced them to accept reductions in their real wages. In addition, of course, earnings have failed to keep up with inflation.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you and the leadership of this House that if these trends continue, your make-be-

lieve revolution may prompt a real revolution and it will not be economic. Have a nice day.

IN SUPPORT OF THE TEAM ACT

(Mr. TALENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, there has been an outstanding practice going on in American workplaces and it is picking up speed. It has been going on for the last 10 or 15 years. It is called employee involvement or TEAMS.

People know this kind of practice as quality circles or safety committees. They can be relatively formal or informal. Here's an example: Employees have a problem with scheduling, and the employer, instead of deciding these things unilaterally says to his supervisors, "Get together with some of the employees and figure out what you are going to do."

This TEAM concept has increased employee satisfaction and American productivity and competitiveness around the world. But unfortunately it is probably illegal under the National Labor Relations Act, because the NLRB thinks of TEAMS as company unions, according to a 60-year-old statute.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to have a chance to do something about that today with the TEAM Act. That is an act that will legalize the kind of employee involvement that is already going on in tens of thousands of workplaces around the country today. It is something that employees want. It will empower them and improve employee satisfaction and American competitiveness.

The bill specifically says company unions are still illegal. It does not apply in organized workplaces. The House ought to pass it today.

NO BUDGET, NO PAY

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, Speaker NEWT GINGRICH announced last week that if political gridlock in Washington results in closing down Federal services to our Nation, so be it.

The Speaker also went on to say that he, as the Speaker, is prepared to force America into a default on its debt for the first time in our history if he does not get his way.

Mr. Speaker, too many politicians on Capitol Hill are talking about a political train wreck as if we are playing with toy trains. A shutdown of Federal services is a serious matter. Members of Congress should take it seriously.

That is why I have introduced legislation that would cut off the paychecks of Members of Congress and the President if the Federal Government shuts down because of budgetary gridlock.